Cycling the Canal du Midi

Trip Code: SGCM

Version:

CYCLE	SELF-GUIDED	LEISURELY
		2



HIGHLIGHTS

- Pedal on quiet cycle lanes and peaceful towpaths along the Canal du Midi, a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Explore Toulouse and discover the magnificent architecture of the vibrant Pink City
- Delve into centuries of history at Carcassonne, Narbonne and Beziers
- Indulge yourself in the delicious cuisine and famed wines of the south of France

- Relax in the comfort and charm of boutique hotels and guesthouses each evening

AT A GLANCE

- 6 days cycling and sightseeing
- Upgraded bike hire included
- Upgraded hotel accommodation
- Saturday departures
- Join at Toulouse / End in Sete

ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE

Introduction

This lovely holiday invites you to experience the delights of southern France in one week, cycling at your own pace along the enchanting Canal du Midi on peaceful dappled lanes and ancient towpaths, surrounded by nature, history and heritage.

Your journey begins in Toulouse, the captivating “Pink City,” where sunlit terracotta façades, elegant squares, and an exceptional food scene set the tone for the days ahead. Leaving the city behind, you will glide along tranquil, tree-lined towpaths into the French countryside past sleepy villages, open fields and idyllic landscapes. You can step back in time in Castelnaudary and medieval Carcassonne, with the impressive citadel’s towering ramparts dominating the skyline. Beautiful vistas of rolling vineyards accompany you through the Languedoc region, and you have the opportunity to discover ancient settlements steeped in history. Skirting the shimmering Thau Lagoon, you will arrive in the vibrant coastal town of Sète, where sandy beaches and superb cuisine provide a perfect finale.

Staying in carefully selected 4-star & 3-star hotels and boutique guesthouses throughout, this is slow travel at its finest—rich in beauty, flavour, and unforgettable moments.

Is this holiday for you?

This leisurely self-guided cycling holiday is perfect for anyone that enjoys journeying on two wheels and indulging in the finer things in life. Over 6 days of cycling, you will ride around 40-60km a day, utilising a combination of canalside cycle paths and quiet side roads that gently undulate through the countryside, travelling at your own pace and with as many rest and sightseeing stops as you like. There is also the option to upgrade your hire bike to an e-bike if you wish to have the extra pedal power on your way.

Itinerary

Version:

Holiday Information

What's Included

- All accommodation as described
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Self-guided information pack containing your route notes
- Luggage transfers
- Upgraded bike hire
- Welcome briefing
- Navigation App and GPX tracks available

What's not Included

- Travel insurance
- Travel to Toulouse
- Travel from Sète
- Visas (if applicable)
- Tourist taxes may apply and are usually under 5 Euros per person per night
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Any entrance fees to sights and monuments
- Personal equipment
- Bike helmet
- Any e-bike upgrades
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional

Your Self-Guided Pack & Route Notes

Each self-guided holiday comes with comprehensive route notes and a map or pocket guidebook of the area you are exploring. The route notes contain information about the places you will visit and the local transport you might need, along with the detailed route notes for your daily walks or cycle rides. We even include some tips for the best places to stop for lunch.

You can expect to receive your Self-Guided Pack containing your route notes, a map or guidebook, and all your relevant documents, no later than 3 weeks before your holiday start-date. We will send your documents using a signed-for courier so that you can track your package and know that it is safely on its way to you. For bookings of more than 4 people we will send an additional Self-Guided Pack. If you do not need this additional pack please inform our Sales Team. Your pack will be sent to the lead booker, so please remind them to pack it before setting off.

Should your self-guided trip be part of a longer adventure requiring you to leave home more than three weeks before your holiday start-date, please inform our Sales Team so that we can make alternative delivery arrangements.

GPS Travel App

This holiday includes a GPS navigation app, which contains the routes for you to follow each day, as well as attractions, coffee stops and points of interest along the way. The app does not need to have Wi-Fi connection to work, you simply follow the instructions we provide you to download the app to your personal smartphone device before you leave home and you are ready to go.

While the travel app is running, your phone battery charge can be consumed faster than normal, so we strongly recommend that you pack a power bank with you just in case you require it.

Self-Guided Families

Our Self-Guided Holidays are perfect for your next family holiday and are suitable for children of all ages.

Our partner hotels and accommodations are able to provide cots for young children, and some offer family rooms. We can also arrange hire of children's bikes and tag along bikes for most of our self-guided cycling trips and with trips such as Lake Constance and the Danube offering routes on designated cycle paths you can rest assured in keeping your family safe.

As a parent we trust that you know your own child's capabilities, so please read the itinerary details to ensure the distances covered each day are suitable for your family. If this is a first time walking or cycling holiday for your family, a centre-based trip is a fantastic option as it allows you to easily opt out of a day's walking if a day of building sand castles, swimming in the pool, or visiting museums is calling instead.

Please discuss this further with our Sales Team who will be happy to assist in picking the best trip for your family.

Joining Arrangements & Transfers

TRAVEL TO YOUR DESTINATION

In some cases you may choose to take a ferry and/or train to your holiday start and end destination. Please see further information on Travelling by Train.

If flying from the UK there are low cost airlines available to the start and from the end of your holiday.

To benefit from full financial protection, ease your holiday planning, and avoid dealing with airlines, we can book scheduled flights from the UK as part of a flight inclusive package. Scheduled flights are usually more expensive than low cost alternatives, however potentially less stressful if your flight is cancelled or delayed. If you book flights through KE Adventure Travel we will offset the carbon of your flight.

The trip starts in Toulouse and ends in Sète. All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you.

The nearest airport for this trip is Toulouse-Blagnac Airport with many departures from UK regional airports.

On arrival, an airport shuttle bus links Toulouse-Blagnac Airport with the city centre, with regular departures every 15-20 minutes. The journey takes approx. 20-45 minutes, depending on traffic.

When your trip ends in Sète, you can take the train (via Narbonne or Beziers) back to Toulouse Matabiau station, from where you can take the tram, airport shuttle bus or a taxi to the airport.

It is also possible to travel flight-free from the UK to France, making use of the Eurostar. From Paris Montparnasse you can take the direct train to Toulouse Matabiau (approx. 4.5 to 5 hours journey time), and return directly from Sète to Paris Gare de Lyon (approx. 3 hours 50 minutes journey time). Please visit www.sncf-connect.com for more information.

Meal Plan

This trip is arranged on a bed & breakfast basis to allow you the most flexibility during your holiday.

Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide for special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your meals with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

Food & Water

Water from the taps is perfectly drinkable on this holiday - please use this to fill your personal bottles for your daily activities. We do not encourage the purchase of single-use plastic bottles.

With a Mediterranean climate boasting over 300 days of sunshine annually, the Occitanie region of the south of France is famous for delicious produce, sumptuous cuisine and exceptional wines. This is the perfect opportunity for a holiday indulging in the local specialties!

While in Castelnaudary, the “cassoulet capital of the world”, you simply must sample said cassoulet! A hearty slow-cooked stew made with beans and various cuts of meat such as duck and pork, the dish takes its name from the earthenware pots called ‘cassoles’ that it is traditionally cooked in.

Some of the freshest shellfish and seafood comes from the Etang de Thau that you will visit at the end of your trip; you will want to make sure you sample the delicious oysters and mussels on offer in this region.

The cuisine of Sète draws influence from Italy, Spain and North Africa. Specialties to try include tielle sètoise (a pie filled with octopus cooked in tomato sauce), moules farcies (mussels stuffed with minced meat), and zézette (a moreish biscuit made of flour, white wine, sugar, egg and olive oil).

And of course, wine aficionados can delight in the viticulture of the world-famous Languedoc region. Most well-known for full-bodied reds with varieties such as Grenache and Syrah, the region also produces crisp whites like Picpoul de Pinet and buttery rich Chardonnays, as well as light rosé wines like Cinsault. Delicious!

Accommodation

This holiday has been designed with indulgence in mind. You will stay in carefully selected hotels and boutique guesthouses of typically 4-star and 3-star French standard, all with their own unique character. Whether they are beautifully-converted classic mansions or contemporary hotels and holiday apartments, each location will be sure to charm you and provide a great space to relax after a day in the saddle. All hotels offer French breakfasts with plenty of delicious pastries to fuel you on your way, and Wi-Fi connectivity is available at all locations.

It is possible to arrange additional nights' accommodation if you would like to extend your time in Toulouse or Sète. Please speak with our Sales Team for more information.

Bike Hire

Upgraded bike hire is included in the cost of this holiday. Your bike will be available to collect in the morning of Day 2 of your holiday, when our local representative will be on hand to assist with fitting your bike.

Upgraded bikes are lighter than standard hybrid bikes and have a trapeze frame for improved stiffness and stability, offering a sportier ride. Utilising higher-grade bike components such as hydraulic disc brakes and 24 gears, you can enjoy more precise handling and smoother gear changes. High quality front suspension forks and a more athletic saddle offer increased comfort over a variety of surfaces and distances.

All bikes come equipped with a pannier bag for your daily essentials, plus a bike lock, pump, and repair kit. Hire bikes do not come fitted with bottle cages as these impede with securing the bikes during transportation.

We strongly recommend that you bring your own helmet with you for the best comfort. We also recommend packing a gel seat for extra comfort or a pair of padded cycling shorts as whilst there are plenty of opportunities to stop and explore, it is always nice to have some padding for a more comfortable ride.

We can arrange children's bikes upon request. Please contact our Sales Team for more information.

Upgrade to an E-bike

If you are looking for an extra boost whilst in the saddle, you can upgrade to an e-bike to make your ride even more leisurely. Equipped with a battery and motor, these electric bikes give you a helping hand whilst you are pedalling, making it easier to climb hills and travel further with less effort and more comfort.

E-bikes are available on this holiday at a supplement of £150 - please request this upgrade option from our Sales Team at the time of booking.

Baggage Allowance

Your main luggage will be transferred between each of your hotels while you are out on your bike. We ask that you please ensure your luggage is limited to 20kg per piece and that your luggage is ready for collection each morning.

General Information

Passport & Visas

Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders.

A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required**,** and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

For other nationalities, please refer to your own Government website for the latest information.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates *(see Health & Vaccinations below),* **and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check the FCDO for the latest advice for **each country visited** before travel.

Health & Vaccinations

Vaccinations:

You should be up to date with the routine vaccinations recommended in the UK for overseas travel.

You must also contact your doctor or travel clinic to check if there are specific vaccinations or other preventive measures that you need for the area you are visiting, in good time before you are due to depart.

Please ensure you are looking at the recommendations for all countries visited on your holiday plus recommendations for any borders you cross.

On holidays to more remote areas you should also have a dental check-up.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents including vaccinations and health certificates.

Please check the FCDO and Travel Health Pro. For all of your intended destinations for up-to-date advice.

Severe Allergies:

If you have a severe allergy please inform the KE office before you travel. We will do all we can to help, but we cannot guarantee an allergy free environment on KE trips.

Currency

The currency for part or all of this holiday is the Euro.

Preparing for your Holiday

The advantage of a self-guided cycling holiday is that you decide the pace. This trip is designed for leisure cyclists and does not require you to be in peak fitness. Having said this, it is always sensible to get some additional exercise before going on an active holiday. After all, the fitter you are the more enjoyable your cycling will be. You should be comfortable with cycling 40-60 km a day on easy cycle paths and we advise to dust off your bike and head out on a few rides before your holiday.

Climate

This region of southern France has a predominantly Mediterranean climate, with hot, sunny summers and mild, dry winters. Spring and autumn temperatures are mild and average around 18-24 degrees centigrade during the day, dropping to a cool 10-14 degrees on average in the evening. The summer months feel hot with the mercury reaching the low 30s during the day and a balmy 18 degrees at night. Showers can occur at any time of the year so it is always worth packing your waterproofs just in case.

Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's **'Travel Aware'** campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that before travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at travelaware.campaign.gov.uk and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. All other nationalities should check their government websites for relevant information.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates directly from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

Books

Canal of the Sun King: The Birth of the Canal du Midi - Les E Smith

The Friar of Carcassonne - Stephen O'Shea

Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our Travel Insurance page for further information and to get a quote.

Equipment Information

SelfGuided Cycling Equipment List

- Cycling shorts
- Cycle helmet

- Functional base layer
- T-shirts
- Scarf
- Hat
- Windproof jacket
- Fleece / extra layer
- Rain protection
- Rucksack (approx. 20 l)
- Small first aid kit for your rucksack
- Sunscreen
- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Camera (batteries/memory card)
- Mobile Phone (ensure your data package covers your destination)
- Handlebar mount that is compatible with your smartphone
- Power bank
- Waterproof phone cover
- Sun glasses
- Personal wash kit
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping to avoid the use of plastic bags

- Tupperware for picnics

Land Only Information

Please note our 'from price' listed is based on 4 persons in double or twin occupancy, however we can quote for any number of travellers, including solo travellers, contact our sales team for a quote.

This trip is available for departures on Saturdays throughout the dates listed.

When considering your travel dates, you might like to investigate any seasonal opening times of attractions and points of interest.

All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. You may even wish to make this holiday part of a bigger adventure or pair it with one of our other holidays. We can arrange additional nights accommodation before or after your self-guided trip, ask our sales team to find out more about this.

Our sales team will be happy to provide you a quote for scheduled flights or alternatively you may wish to book your own flights with a low cost carrier from your nearest regional airport.

Please DO NOT book your flights before you have received your booking confirmation and your deposit has been taken.

Why Choose KE

Why KE

With the choice of an 8-day or a 10-day itinerary for those with a little more time on their hands, we have designed this holiday with indulgence in mind, perfect for the discerning traveller to embrace slow travel and the French joie de vivre.We have included upgraded bike hire, plus e-bike upgrades are available, to make this holiday feel even more leisurely.

Please Note This document was downloaded on 19/11/2026 and the trip is subject to change